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WAYSIDE MUSINGS

A Little Volume of Verse

BY

CHARLES NEWTON WOOD

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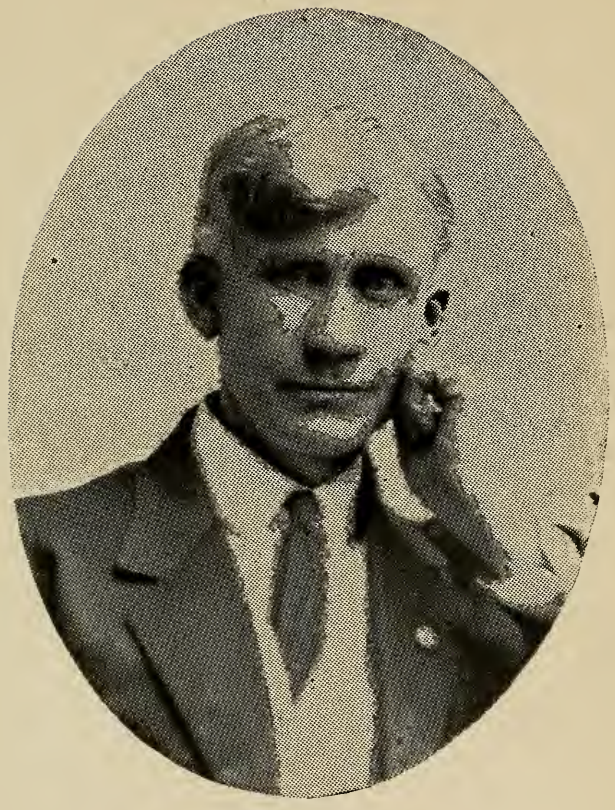

Sincerely Yours,
Charles Newton Wood

Wayside Musings

A LITTLE VOLUME OF VERSE

BY

CHARLES NEWTON WOOD

1911

JOURNAL PRINTING COMPANY

Kirksville, Missouri

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To that good company of friends of His and mine who
have gladly helped a needy brother
this volume is affectionately
Dedicated

FOREWORD.

THIS little book is issued on the completion of fifteen years' consecutive service as a Methodist Preacher in the Kirksville District.

The Author wishes it to speak for him in the homes of his dear friends. If they find here thoughts that shall strengthen faith, remove care or wreathe a face in smiles, he is well repaid for any effort which its production cost. He sincerely trusts that good and only good shall come from its possession and perusal.

La Plata, Mo., May 25, 1911.

THE AUTHOR.

Wayside Musings.

HIDE AND SEEK.

"Bushel o' wheat, bushel o' rye"—
Have I dreamed those days or passed them by?
It seems to me as I think them o'er,
I can still hear the feet on the old barn floor
And a clear voiced urchin blithely cry:
"Bushel o' wheat, bushel o' rye,
All 'taint hid holler 'I'!"

Slanting sun on a summer day,
Mow piled high with the scented hay,
Red rose flashing on childhood's cheek—
Now for a game of "hide and seek;"
Count a hundred as off we hie—
"Bushel o' wheat, bushel o' rye,
All 'taint hid holler 'I'!"

Tucked in the manger, up in the mow,
Hid in the rail-pile—you can't tell how,
Under the pig-shed, behind the door—
Seeking a place never thought of before;
Hearts beating happily as swift feet fly—
"Bushel o' wheat, bushel o' rye,
All 'taint hid holler 'I'!"

'I' and 'I'—how very slow!
Black-eyed Jennie and careful Joe
Want to be well hid—wise indeed!
Ten more counted with anxious speed,
Then comes the test of foot and eye
As "All 'taint hid holler 'I';
All eyes open!" rises high.

Bright eyes watch for each well known face—
"One, two, three, for Annie and Grace!"—
"One, two, three, for Willie and Joe—
Behind the gran'ry—I saw you—oh
You're there I know; you can't fool me!"
Swift and sly with "One, two, three!"
Jennie and Joe have 'got home free.'

Say, do you know I'd give this farm
To feel again sweet childhood's charm?
Just to toss this high-flown wisdom away
For 'hide and seek' on a summer day?
Of those in the golden days gone by,
Who played with me in the haymow high,
Wonder how many could answer 'I'?

HIDDEN GRAVES.

There are graves in our hearts,
Yes, graves,
Where the sad ghost of Hopelessness raves;
Where our hopes newly born,
Ne'er to welcome the morn,
Now rest for all years
'Neath the rain of our tears
And our lives are left cheerless, forlorn.

There are graves in our hearts,
Yes, graves,
Where are sleeping our loved and our lost;
And the sigh of regret
Clings to memory yet;
Tho' the long years have rolled
Since their bells have been tolled,
Still our cheeks with grief's dewdrops are wet.

There are graves in our hearts,
Yes, graves,
And we think of the gems they contain:
There's the heart pure as snow
Of the dear long ago,
And the loves of the past
That our lives will outlast
Which we buried with lingering pain.

There are graves in our hearts,
Dear graves,
Where we go in the calm, silent hours
And the memories throng
Sweet as evening song;
To our hearts comes the balm
Of the heavenly calm
And we steal away chastened and strong.

"All that sleep in the grave shall arise."
'Tis the voice of the King of the skies.
Though committed in trust
Unto ashes and dust
Or adrift in the breast
Of the dim sea's unrest,
Thou shalt clasp them again to thy sad stricken heart,
Thou shalt meet them and greet them and never more part.

SOME TIME.

What though wearily
The days fall into the past;
Sadly, drearily,
Joys too fragile to last
Are buried with lingering pain;
Our hearts will sing again,
Like the tolling of some forgotten chime—
Some time; some time;
For peace abiding and joy sublime
Are safe in the keeping of dear Some Time.

Flowers withering,
Betoken the summer's death,
Dark clouds gathering
Speak of the Storm King's breath—
Cheer thee, my heart, thy way;
Give to the world today
Thy faith and thy life shall grow sublime
Some time; some time;
Like the tender words of a childhood's rhyme
Are the joys that cling to the sweet Some Time.

Hearts are breaking
E'er with their joyless fate;
Courage taking
Only to sigh and wait:
But the sun on the hills shall laugh and play,
And lowering shadows shall flee away
As the sun's ray parteth the morning rime—
Some time; some time;
We hear the bells from the tower chime
That stands on the shores of dear Some Time.

A DECORATION DAY ODE.

A Plea for Peace.

Sheathe ye the sword!
    Long has it reeked
With the world's bravest blood and rarest.
What mean ye that ye scatter death
    Where hopes are high and visions fairest?
Are there no early dead, no sorrow surge,
    That these should die to swell earth's funeral dirge?

Kill ye no more!
    Let Amalek
Stain his foul hands with vilest slaughter;
Let Philistine and Amorite
    Count blood a baser thing than water.
God's sons should show their heavenly lineage
    And write their Father's will on history's page.

Let us have peace!
    The angel choir
For long their orison have chanted.
'Tis time we heard their wondrous word
    And balm, not rue and wormwood, planted.
So hate and vengeance be for aye forgot
    And angel Peace heal War's last fever-spot.

Let love abound!
    A sin-cursed race
Reaches torn hands to pitying Heaven.
Shall we not haste with oil and wine
    And heal the wounds by Satan given?
Then star to star shall chant a joyous strain,
    While heavenly harpers join the glad refrain.

TO MEMPHIS.

So Memphis, thou hast risen
Upon thy sunlit hill
And vowed that crime and evil
Shall work no more their will.
Thy task is great, fair city,
Thy spoilers wise and strong.
God give thee strength and courage
To conquer every wrong.

Say to thy sister cities:
As God is on his throne,
That righteousness still blesses
And sin still slays his own;
That he who sows the whirlwind
Shall reap the tempest, wild;
That vice's rank and ripened growth
Drops seed within the child.

Say to thy sisters, Memphis,
Not all for gain and trade
Are Christian nations founded
And Christian cities made;
That lives are more than lucre
And homes do pelf outweigh;
That guilty gold can never
For ruined virtue pay.

So, Memphis, queenly city,
Let fall thy shining blade
On him who dares pollute thee
To ply his hellish trade.
This is no time for shrinking;
Cease not till thou art free.
The prayers of loyal thousands
Ascend this day for thee.

OUR SOLDIER DEAD.

Hark! a cry for the brave—
'Tis their country's call
As the war-clouds darkly lower;
While the thunderous tread of a host in arms
Betokens death's dreadful shower.—
Ye may abide with the flock and the field
Or dwell in the safety their peril doth yield;
Theirs is the tent and the tower.

Ah, a smile for the brave
As they march away—
But who shall greet their returning?
As their thin ranks break when the strife is done
Whose eyes with tears will be burning?
These knew the face of their foemen wild;
The slain by the whirlwind of death uppiled;
Who know the life-long yearning?

Ho, a cheer for the brave!
How the foe they spurn
As the war-cloud gathers o'er them;
While the skies resound
With the jubilant sound
As the foe flies before them.—
Eat in the shade of the tree and the vine,
Where the sweet fruits of liberty e'er may be thine,
They know what bitterness bore them.

Twine a wreath for the brave,
For the fair green mound
Where their sacred dust is lying;
While we pledge anew
To be ever true
To the land they blessed while dying.
Blended with justice be valor and might;
Ever her glory be virtue and right;
Ever the old flag be flying!

WAR'S ECHO.

A Decoration Day Ode.

Softly tread! this billowing turf
Urns the dust of heroes, sleeping,
Why, for love of human good,
Gained the heights their sons are keeping.
O'er their beds with tender care,
Let us scatter blossoms fair.

Once again rehearse the tale:
How, when others idly waited,
These courageous hearts and true
Sped the right, the wrong abated;
Gladly gave their lives; I trow
Greater love can no man show.

Clinging arms could not detain,
Mother's tear, nor kiss of lover,
Wife and home, nor hope of peace,
Duty's vision could not cover.
These they left for march and fray,
Her clear mandate to obey.

Crimson roses, speak what stains
Marked their breasts so freely proffered.
Pure white flowers, how fair a gift
They on Freedom's altar offered.
Drop we tears; bestow sweet flowers;
Fallen brothers, ye are ours!

From each bloody battlefield,
Swamp, and stream, and noisome prison,
Where a soldier tasted death,
Seems a star-born voice arisen.
Calm and strong, and crystal clear,
May it reach a Nation's ear.

"Sons of sires who met defeat,
Sons, whose sires returned victorious,
Brothers all, let war's red hand
Rend no more our banner glorious!
Guard it well from spot or stain;
Be our blood not shed in vain!"

❖ ❖ ❖

SONG OF THE FISHER MAID.

O, fair breeze that fans my cheek
This bonnie morn in June,
Thou chasest all my care away
And setst my heart atune.
Thou kissest every pretty flower
In woodland, lawn and lea;
O, fill the sails of that slow ship
That brings my love to me!

Somewhere upon the ocean's breast
His gallant ship doth ride:
How can I wait the happy day
That brings him to my side!
Fly, balmy breath of bonnie June,
Fly o'er the shimmering sea
And steal a kiss from my lad's brown cheek
And hasten back to me!

Thy gentle breath, the rustling tops
Of gray, old trees doth sway,
But the ship that holds the big round world
Slowly lingers on its way.
O, breath of dawning, swiftly speed
Across the laughing sea
And fill the great ship's snowy wings
And bring my love to me!

A THINKIN'.

Now, Bill was not like other folks
You're meetin' all the while;
He was a born philosopher
An' had the oddest style
Of facin' all the difficulties
Risin' in his way—
He'd never let a single cloud
On his horizon stay;
But when perplexities would come
An' all his hopes were sinkin',
He'd allus smile a little while
Then settle down to thinkin'.

Away back in his baby crib
It was the self-same way—
He crowed and laughed with all his might
The blessed live-long day.
You couldn't noways make him cry
He was that bright an' happy,
The chief delight an' treasure
Of his mother an' his pappy.
He'd try to eat his little fist
His big blue eyes a blinkin',
An' when he found he couldn't
You'd a laughed to see him thinkin'.

When boyhood's awkwardness came on
With boyhood's bashful ways,
Bill shunned the plow an' spade an' hoe
To spend the summer days
A studyin' the bugs an' things,
A catchin' snakes an' rabbits,
A peepin' an' a pryin'
At their houses and their habits.

All the beauty an' the loveliness
Of Nature he was drinkin';
It seemed as if his very soul
Was all wrapped up in thinkin'.

So life passed on an' boyhood dear
At manhood's doorway faltered.
Bill kept the love of other days—
Its object slightly altered.
From lovin' unresponsive frogs
With nets an' snares around him,
Himself fair taken in a net
One May-day mornin' found him.
An' while the trapper, Cupid sly,
Each small escape was chinkin',
Bill owned himself a captor caught
An' set himself to thinkin'.

'Twas Mary, witchin' little sprite,
His guileless heart had captured;
Whose frown made darkness of his day,
Whose smile his soul enraptured;
An' seein' all his tremblin' fears
Her heart with pity fluttered
An' Bill choked down upon the words
He felt but never uttered,
Till one day throwin' all aside,
Their hands together linkin',
"We'll never, never part," said Bill,
"If you with me are thinkin'."

An' heaven smiled upon their home
An' plenty met with pleasure;
An' bitter tears with honied love
Filled up life's fleeting measure.

Till snowy locks adorned his brow
An' children's children blessed him
No troublous thought or cankering care
Had worried or distressed him.
Then Mary wandered from his side,
From life's rough roadway shrinkin';
He turned his tearful eyes to her—
Then dropped 'em down—a thinkin'.

The autumn sunshine stole into
A room with dyin' splendor
An' touched an old man sittin' there
With kisses warm and tender.
He raised his wrinkled face an' saw
A pearly-gated city.
A Book his aged hand caressed,
Sang low of love and pity.
"Friend of my youth," he whispered low,
"Let not thy servant tarry,
I'm old and weary of the way—
I want to meet my Mary."

An' as the sun behind the hills
His glowin' fires were sinkin',
He shone upon an aged face
With perfect peace in every trace—
Just like he was a thinkin'.

THE LIFE BOAT.

"Stay! Captain, stay! the night is wild
And yonder stand thy wife and child!
Though fears have no dominion over thee,
Think thou of them nor tempt the raging sea.'
"Though billows wild may tower o'er my head,
I trust the God of storms," the Captain said.

"Stay! husband, stay!" the trembling mother cries.
The foam-capped billows meet the frowning skies;
On the dark sea the winds their fury pour
And hurl its flying billows on the shore.
"O, wife, I must away," the Captain cries,
"For yonder in the storm my duty lies."

"Stay! father, stay!" the wailing child entreats
While fury on the sea with fury meets;
Loud thunders through the sky with thunders sweep
And horror grapples horror in the deep.
"My boy," with solemn voice the father said,
"Where duty lies is neither fear nor dread."

"Speed! comrades, speed! Why safety seek?
Are not the strong the keepers of the weak?
So speed away"—one prayer for wife and home
Then plunge amid the billows' blinding foam.

Row! boatmen, row far o'er the harbor bar!
Hark! hear the boom of signal guns afar!—
Some riven heart its prayer to Heaven sends,
On thy strong arms some destiny depends.

Ah, brothers, ah, upon the wreck,
'Mid the wild tempest on the reeling deck,
How like sweet Life by Providence Divine
Snatched from the jaws of death to feel the saving line.
Grim, bearded faces seem as angels' there
And each uncertain breath, thanksgiving prayer.

Home, brothers, home, to love and rest.
Fear not the storm; thine is a mission blest.
Home from thy battle with the angry wave
Where shall we look for men more true and brave?
Gleaning thy harvest from the hungry sea,
Duty well done thy rich reward shall be.

HAZELNUTS.

When the frost flowers showed their colors
On each sturdy forest tree
An' the birds began to twitter of the snow,
Then us boys 'ud hunt the hollers—
Bill an' Scott an' Em an' me,
An' a hazelnuttin' frolic was the go.
'Twas no use to talk of chorin',
Or the fodder to be shocked,
Life's glad way was shunnin' all those sordid ruts.
By day's fairest dreams attended
An' at night by angels rocked,
We went laughin' o'er the hills for hazelnuts.

Little brown-faced, shiny fellers,
Grinnin' in a sour shuck
Or a-waitin' for a touch to tumble down,
While the bushes bowed perlitely
Jest to emphasize our luck—
You may take the puny pleasures of the town.
There's a flood of inspiration
In the coolin' Autumn air
An' the sun a path thro' golden glory cuts.
Surely Heaven's benediction fell
Upon our spirits there,
As we homeward took our store of hazelnuts

All those simple childish pleasures
Have a charm to move the heart,
An' to leave a glow an' gladness o'er my way;
An' the dearest recollections
From the misty dimness start
As I muse upon a vanished Autumn day.
While the lofty lord of leisure
Lolls upon his silken bed
Or upon his marble pavement idly struts,
Memory holds a fairer vision
Than his soul has ever fed—
'Tis some happy boys a-huntin' hazelnuts.

Sittin' snugly by the fire, now,
I see us gather, all,
While the wintry wind is howlin' at the door;
Each familiar face is present,
Each loved name I fondly call,
An' a basket sits invitin' on the floor
With the orchard's golden fruitage
An' the nuts from Autumn's hills
An'—your pardon, but these tears the vision shuts.
Ah, I dwelt in goodly fellowship
An' laughed at earthly ills
When a barefoot boy I gathered hazelnuts!

IMMORTALITY.

We die not, yea, we live for aye.
This hoping, longing breast,
When circling stars have loosed their bars
Shall find a place to rest.

Tho' bound with flesh's alluring chain,
'Tis ever taught to rise;
Tho' here 'tis bowed by storm and cloud
Its home is in the skies.

This house of clay must go the way
To earthly things assigned;
But leash, nor band, nor human hand
Can stay the flight of mind.

O, why should man refuse the hope,
And think his being vain,
When God hath taught his inmost thought
To read the message plain?

The hosts of night pass from our sight
To light some fairer shore;
Shall sons of God rejoin the clod
And greet the light no more?

The lily, pale, springs in the vale
At smiling Spring's command;
Shall Heaven's guest in darkness rest
And shame its Maker's hand?

O, mansion frail, thy bloom shall pale
And flee thee with thy breath;
But naught can tame this inward flame
Nor can it taste of death.

O, deathless soul, while onward roll
The chariot wheels of Time,
Thy heavenward flight shall seek the light
And reach its goal sublime.

TO A MARCH ROBIN.

Herald sweet, of blithesome spring,
Hail we thy appearing!
With thy music each delight
Seems the more endearing.

How thy matin, rising now,
With such melting measure,
Falls upon thy heart and mine,
Giving double pleasure.

Dost thou reck of coming storm?
Of the snow clouds veiling
From thy eyes the smiling sun?
Wintry winds' assailing?

Carest thou for winter's breath?
Winter's freezing kisses
Falling on thy tiny form
Sure thy joy dismisses!

Blending with the flying flakes
And the north wind's roaring,
Rises, clear, thy song of cheer
Thy brave heart's outpouring.

Robin, dear, a lesson, true,
Thou to me hast given:
Heeding not the storms of Earth,
Let me sing of Heaven.

IN MEMORY OF NELSE J. SCURLOCK.

FEBRUARY 14, 1859—NOVEMBER 14, 1902.

Harp, that oft soothed the sad singer's soul,
Mute now in hope's afterglow,
Never again shall thy sweet chords thrill,
Cunningly voicing the singer's will,
Ceased are thy melodies, silent thy strings—
The singer's head lies low.

Hills, brown and bare under Boreal blight,
Ye knew him well, ye well know
How light a step hath a care-weary heart;
How sadly dwelleth a soul apart;
Oft on your mantle his hot tears fell,
Fold ye him tenderly—so.

Trees, growing gray by his own fair lane,
Ye, in the dear long ago,
Heard the glad laugh of a rare, bonny lad.
Did his bright glance make your ancient hearts glad?
Blithely he sang, but ah, never again
Shall the sweet melody flow.

Lone mother-heart, by a lonely hearth,
With her sad loss bowed low,
Dreams of a baby face—patter of feet—
Shy sturdy youth after knowledge most fleet;
Dreams—but the dreamer's fair visions have fled—
He lies out there 'neath the snow.

Sadly we mourn for the early dead—
Midnight for mid-noon's bright glow—
Flowers o'er thy couch may the gentle Spring strew;
Grace mayst thou find who oft bitterness knew;
Wrapped in thy grave may thy faults ever rest—
Rest where thy head lies low.

TO THE STARS THROUGH DIFFICULTIES.

Soul, that ever journeys onward
O'er the path of life,
Knowest thou the way thou goest
Is a way of strife?
Or hath wisdom's timely warning,
Even in thy early morning,
Unto thee been given?

Hath fair Fortune met thy fair starting
With a frowning face?
Lofty Fame thy humble station
Given naught to grace?
Hath e'en Comeliness denied thee?
Dim Obscureness sought to hide thee?
Gird thee for the race!

Hast thou seen the millions bowing
At the feet of sin?
True devotion's holy temple
Worshipless within?
Grieve not, soul, let naught delay thee;
Doubts and fears may oft dismay thee,
But the end will sure repay thee—
Stay not, but begin.

Hast thou found that fairest roses
Hide the sharpest thorn?
Oft the laurels envied circlet
Witless brows adorns?
Shrink not, soul, thy faith restore thee;
Guiding stars are watching o'er thee;
What though dark the way before thee,
Cometh brighter morns.

Straight before thee lies thy pathway;
Falter not.
Be, to God, thy true allegiance
Ne'er forgot.
Faint not thou when foes beset thee,
And thy dearest friends forget thee,
Angel Hope lies dead.
Turn thy eyes from earthly weeping,
Where the stars their watch are keeping,
Gladly on and onward striving
Godward, heavenward led.

THE OLD CHERRY TREE.

In the old-fashioned garden
Of an old-fashioned farm,
In the dear days of long ago
So full of life and charm,
In the very brightest corner—
A Paradise to me,
Stood the shrine of my boyhood—
An old cherry tree.

I can still see the flowers
And smell their sweet perfume.
I knew every beauty
In that labyrinth of bloom,
And the days of the future
Were quite as bright to me,
As I saw them through the blossoms
Of that old cherry tree.

There the sweet scented clover
His couch inviting spread,
And the soft, tangled grasses
Made a pillow for my head;
Then I'd set, from her moorings,
The ship of fancy free
And gladly go a-sailing
'Neath the old cherry tree.

When June with her crimson
Followed April with her snow,
To my songster-haunted resting-place
Blithely would I go.
O, the lamp of old Aladdin
Could no treasure give to me
Dearer than the glowing rubies
On that old cherry tree.

Then life, to my boyish eyes,
Was frolic, sun and shine;
And the sky never shimmered
O'er a gladder heart than mine;
And the hearts of the wide world
Were true as they could be
When I whistled in the branches
Of the old cherry tree.

Ah, the bright dreams of boyhood!
Their innocent delight
Is lost down the roadway—
Vanished from our sight.
But I've wished often, sadly,
I could teach myself to see
The world as I saw it
From the old cherry tree.

FAIRY BELLS.

When the day has hushed her voices
And night's deep calm's descended
While the sun's last light is dying
On the dim hills of the west,
When the leisure-loving cattle
From the pasture field have wended
Is the time I lie and listen
To the music I love best.

How it tinkles in the garden
Where the flowers are a-sleeping!
How from far across the meadow, now,
It faintly, sweetly swells!
Now among the dear, old maples
Its fantastic tones are creeping—
'Tis the ringing and the swinging
Of the faries' evening bells.

Ah, how often in those dear days
Ere my heart had known a sorrow
Would I sit and watch the shadows steal
O'er greening wood and hill.
Then life was full of promise;
Fair shone each glad tomorrow;
All my heart with Nature's melody
Was joyously athrill.

Then from out each gloomy hollow
Came the chiming and the ringing
Of the fairy bellmen swinging
As they wove their magic spells.
O, such bright and wondrous visions
To my child-heart they were bringing
As I listened to the music
Of those merry fairy bells.—

Fancy avers, for strains so sweet
The watching stars their praise repeat,
While the soft night winds quit the lea
To join the merry minstrelsy.
List! "Low, so low."
The night winds blow;"
"Ring soft and sweet."
The stars repeat;
"With joy we ring," the fairies sing,
"Sad hearts are blest; the weary rest."

Far away are home and childhood,
Dimly seen in fond reflections,
Yet memory her treasures bring,
Again her story tells;
And trooping back with gladness
Come joyous recollections,
When I hear the tender chiming
Of those dear old fairy bells.—

Now, list! each tiny bellman rings,
Each elfin chorus chants and sings;
From weed and briar and flower bell
Weird, sweet-sung vespers float and swell.
Borne back where life's rough way began
The child sits musing with the man.
Care wends: sweet hopes vouchsafe me cheer;
I mark that olden eve-song, dear.—

"Ring, ring, the fond delights we sing
Of love-lit youth so fleet of wing,
Of baby hands and flower face,
Of fair forms laid in lonely place,
Of tear-drop's fall and gleaming star;
Or bide we near or wander far
Sweet peace at last for hearts oppressed;
Surcease of woe: O, rest ye, rest!"

A Human Wish.

To Rev. and Mrs. C. S. Rennison, as a word of Christian comfort in their great sorrow over the loss of their first-born.

O, Angel with the golden key,
Have you seen a little boy,
His shining hair like burnished gold,
His eyes adance with joy?
'Twas but a little while ago
He slipped away to play;
Tell him we mourn and miss him so,
And send him back today.

Is it to care and sorrow?
To longing all in vain?
To blighted hopes and broken dreams?
To weariness and pain?
To bear the burning, livid scar
Of fever's fiery dart,
That you would call your darling back,
O, loving mother heart?

But, Angel with the tender eyes,
We saw in him the sign
Of manhood's high fruition
And labor all divine
We dreamed he would accomplish;
God's trumpet to his lips,
By faith we heard him preach the word
Whose star knows no eclipse.

Ah, mother, anxious mother,
God's ways are ever true;
Not here alone, but also there
Is sphere for service, too.

To fly on mercy's missions
And minister to men;
To know the joy of life in Heaven
Unguessed by mortal ken;

To climb eternal heights of thought,
Lilies of truth to glean,
And hand in hand with Love Divine
To walk in pastures green,
By singing streams whose crystal depths
Murmur of endless rest;
And dwell, mid Heaven's music,
In the mansions of the blest.

Not here, where moth and rust corrupt,
But where Life's flowers bloom;
Not here where mists and shadows crowd,
But there, beyond the tomb,
Shall we attain the destiny
By God ordained for men,
And kindred souls through endless years
Shall never part again.

THE LOOM OF LIFE.

All weavers are we in the loom of life
And fast as time's shuttle flies,
A wonderful fabric widens and grows
Before our wondering eyes.
The past and the future, the threads of the warp,
Are blent with the woof of the days
But the pattern we weave, we not now perceive,
Whether merits it pity or praise.

Spread fair on this pattern in tracery plain
Are the thoughts and deeds of each day;
Every word, whether freighted with gall or with balm,
Doth the store of the heart betray.
O let, then, the beautiful threads of love
With the colors of cheerfulness twine;
Let honor and truth mark the weaving of youth,
Then shall age's all virtues combine.

As roll the swift years in their flight unseen,
Onbearing us ever and aye,
We mingle the threads with thoughtless hands
Unthinking of what they display.
And oft o'er the web when our eyes are dimmed
And oft when by happiness fed,
The bright and the gay with the solemn and gray
In varying tintings are spread.

At last when the lingering god of day
Is sowing the west with gold,
Shall the tired hearts and the tired hands
The end of the work behold.
And the Master will look on the work of the day
With a pitying glance and mild
If he sees on each error the pitiful stain
Of the tears of a trusting child.

Thus touched by the gladdening ray of his grace
And the wonderful power of his love,
Shall the work of our lives be accounted as fit
For the beautiful mansions above.

❖ ❖ ❖

JACK BINNS.

A Marconi operator who saved his ship at the risk of his own life.

And who are you, we wonder?
Some Southern mother's child?
Or born where Western waters wake
Their music sweet and wild?
Where green harps of the Northern pines
The wind-god's fingers thrill?
Or where the scant grass meekly decks
Some bleak New England hill?

Whether of Scandinavian blood
Or Latin lineage;
If Briton or Hibernian marks
Your birth-book's primal page;
Whether by farm of factory
Your first faint steps began;
'Mid poverty or plenty, sure
That spot produced a man.

Snug in your floating citadel
That dismal, sunless day,
Your wizard fingers knew the art
By which the wireless ray
Of keen electric energy
Searched all the salt sea wind;
Flung far the thoughts your quick brain bade
And read the shore-world's mind.

You heard the crash of rending ribs,
    You felt the furious stroke
When the unhappy Florida
    Her prow of steel and oak
Drove deep into your painted side
    With horrid certainty,
And left you like a stricken swan
    Slow floating on the sea.

O'erhead you heard the great doors clang,
    Below, the waters' glee,
And you smiled in the face of death,
    Your fingers on the key.
The leaden hours crept by, but you
    Thought little of your life;
You heard calm Duty's whisper
    Above the sounds of strife.

The ocean greyhounds heard you cry
    And quickly sought your place;
The Frenchman caught your message
    And joined swiftly in the race;
The great Cunarder swung about,
    To waft you hearty cheers,
And Saxon songs were blent that day
    With sad Italia's tears.

The blood that stained Thermopylæ
    And Marathon was brave;
O'er Bunker Hill and Gettysburg
    Shall valor's laurels wave;
He who faced death for others
    And plucked them from his hand,
Is peer of ancient heroes
    And every inch a man!

TO A DAISY IN THE SNOW.

Thou lookest, little flower,
Little daughter of the earth,
A pretty guardian angel
To the clod that gave thee birth.
Above its cold, dark bosom
Thy tinted leaves unfold
Contented not to hide from sight
Thy tiny heart of gold.

Thou seemest, little flower,
Little daughter of the sod,
With thy flower voice to whisper
Of the tenderness of God;
Warmly cradled, safely guarded
As the earth was swept by storm,
Kissed into a life of fragrance
Clothed with his own chosen form.

Thou sendest, little flower,
Little earth-star twinkling bright,
To my human heart a star-beam
Glad with a pure delight.
Prophet art thou and teacher,
Bearer of things divine;
Asking of earth, unnoted,
To fragrantly grow and shine.

Thou ceasest, little flower,
Little dainty God-thought sweet,
Thou closest thy pearly eyelids
Thy mission brief complete.
What to the earth that bore thee,
What to the heart o'erwrought
Thou wast, O, simple floweret,
Lies with the Great First Thought.

Thou teachest, little flower,
Little woodland-dweller fair,
A silent wondrous lesson
Of flower-wisdom, rare:
"Give, with a steady purpose
Thy heart's best store today;
Look ever, flower-like, upward,
Trusting in God alway."

THE TEACHER.

You may sing about the sages,
And the heroes of the ages,
Who have written on the pages
Of history their names;
But a simple occupation
Claims my ardent admiration,
And at well deserved laudation
My poetic fancy aims.

There's no station in a nation
More invites consideration,
From the pauper in his hovel
To the prince upon his throne;
E'en a Queen with all the honor
Of a thousand isles upon her
Than this humble ruler, happy,
In a Kingdom all his own.

In his halls are congregated
All the future celebrated;
Multi-millionaires are fated
To obey his lordly rule;

Poets pay him their devotion;
Warriors wait for his promotion;
For he touches land and ocean
And his kingdom is the school.

Whether willing or unwilling
Hopes are springing, souls are thrilling
At the words of this exponent
Of the psychologic art;
Like some ancient carver, sitting,
Sees he well how time is flitting
As he traces sentence fitting
On the tablets of the heart.

Marshal all the inspiration
That owes him its derivation,
Let us give a glad ovation
To extol his weight and worth;
Twine a wreath of fairest roses
(Which some sprigs of birch discloses,)
Crown this faithful modern Moses
Leading on the doubting earth.

BY GOOD RIGHTS.

Say, Billy Bray, jes' step this way.
D'ye mind what your gran'pap used to say
When he had the backin' of honest stuff
That was true like him an' solid enough
To convince all comers his claims wus good?
He had one word as a true man should:
"By good rights."

For right, you know, can wrong no man.
You can't beat right an' there's few than can,
By good rights.

Pshaw, Beau Braw, I kin smell the straw
If yer clothes do fit you without a flaw.
You can comb that roof for an hour an' a half
An' grin at the girls an' titter an' laugh,
But your aimless life would look mighty sick,
Alongside grandsire's measurin' stick:
By good rights.

A well filled head an' an honest heart
An' two willin' hands are a right good start,
By good rights.

Hi' Sim Sly, with yer shifty eye,
When yer pap's gran'father would sell or buy
Did he spend six days an' ten nights more
A hatchin' schemes to gouge the poor
An' cheat the widder an' skin the weak?
He was seven stories above a sneak—
By good rights.

In his honest heart it did him good
To let the whole world know where he stood—
By good rights.

So high an' low, I would have you know,
We have strayed from the ways of long ago.
When quiet speech an' deeds of gold
An' sweet good-will blessed young an' old;
When a good old rule held sway with men
An' right was right, the test was, then,
By good rights.
O, take yer style an' yer highflown ways
An' give me the rule in gran'pap's days—
By good rights.

THE CARDINAL.

Like a gleam of red fire
Over coppice and brier
Flashes my Lord Cardinal;
The year's at its noon
And the woodland's atune,
While the smiling blue bends over all.
"Sweet! Sweet! Sweet!
Tiny hearts beat in our home nest so neat,
Sweet! They are sweet! They are sweet!"

The wild bees keep humming
That winter is coming;
Still sings the brave Cardinal.
While friends are departing
And southward are starting,
Hear him cheerily after them call:
"True! True! True!
God in his blue will keep watch over you.
True! He is true! He is true!"

Mid snowing and blowing
And autumn's rough going
Carols our good Cardinal.
A singer so bold,
Oh, he fears not the cold;
He's a word of good cheer for us all.
"Bright! Bright! Bright!"
He sings his glad praise of the fair summer days:
"Bright! They were bright! They were bright!"

The winter storm lowers,
The wild woodland cowers,
Still Cardinal sings on his way;
His warm shelter he knows,
Though the icy wind blows
And he sings of the flowers of May.
"White! White! White!
Spring time's in sight and the plum tree's alight;
White! They are white! They are white!"

The green grass is starting,
The brown buds are parting,
O, list to the Cardinal's voice!
In the merry spring chorus
His notes ripple o'er us
And bid every listener rejoice.
"Hear! Hear! Hear!
Clouds disappear when we trust, never fear,
Hear! A new year! A new year!"

COMFORT ME.

When my soul in proud rebellion
Rises 'gainst the ills of life
And with tired wing and fretful
Beats her bars in fruitless strife;
When my hopes like shadows flee,
Jesus, Savior, comfort me.

Oft my heart, athirst for comfort,
Feels the bitter sting of hate;
Oft I long for cooling fountains
Sorrow's Mara to abate.
Let thy love my solace be:
Blessed Master, comfort me.

When fierce clouds across my pathway
Pile their shadows broad and deep,
And the dimness deepens doubting
Whether I the path can keep,
Let mine eyes the beacon see;
Star of Promise, comfort me.

Help me o'er life's rugged roadway
Travel on nor e'er repine;
If beset by sorest trial
Let thy will be done, not mine—
Only hear this human plea:
Guide and help and comfort me.

As I near the journey's ending
And the mists before me rise;
In that solemn, awful moment
When I close these mortal eyes,
Conqueror of Calvary,
World's Redeemer, comfort me.

THOUGHTS ON DEATH.

When one held dear shall sink to silent rest,
With pale hands folded on his pulseless breast,
O, start not trembling from his coffined clay,
Put not the sight of his dead face away,
But closer draw and o'er his casket bend
And whisper—if thou canst—"Here lies a friend."

The face whose lines are written on thy heart
Is one with nature, now, and knows no art;
Not friendship's golden touch, nor love's fond wile
Can shake the sway of death's unchanging smile.
Would those poor eyes that looked in thine erstwhile,
Pity for pity gave and smile for smile,
Wish, should sweet life to blighting death give place,
A dearer sight than thy familiar face?

That heart, sad dweller in a breast so calm,
Sought e'er to yield thee friendship's soothing balm;
Should this grim hand its chilly grasp untwine,
Would it not beat glad unison with thine?
Those feet that ran, that yours might go with ease
And always sought your slightest wish to please,—
Should these dread fetters quickly broken be
Would they not swiftly seek a path with thee?

O, friend when in the calm of death I sleep,
Nor word nor look shall break my silence deep,
As oft in life we watched the teeming earth
And saw the days decline, the morn's fair birth
And loved each other and this God-wrought sphere,
Remember I am friend or there or here;
Honor the tent where once thy friend did dwell;
Thy friend hath fled to fairer scenes—'tis well.

THE LOST DIAMOND.

In the hoary land of Isis
Where the sunshine falleth free,
And the mountains of the Southland
Toss their waters to the sea;
Where the summer ever calleth
Over mountain, lake and hill,
Dwelt an ancient diamond-seeker
And he served a master's will.

When the rosy-fingered morning
Touched with gold the eastern gate,
And until the purple twilight
Saw his flowers nod and wait,
Sought this ancient son of Egypt;
One bright hope forbade a frown—
'Twas to find a fitting jewel
For his royal master's crown.

Eager-eyed, with tireless fingers
Hour by hour and day by day,
Saw he from among the rubbish,
Daylight die and fade away;
Saw he there one day before him,
Lying stained and rough and dark,
What, to him, seemed but a pebble,
Innocent of flame or spark.

And the weary-hearted seeker,
As he plucked its crust apart,
Little thought that grimy pebble
Held a diamond in its heart.
Only for one fateful moment
Did he hold his heart's desire—
Then he tossed away the pebble
With its glowing heart of fire.

Bent with years and torn with trial
Still he sought with ceaseless care
And his pitiful endeavor
Had the tenderness of prayer;
But his hope was vainly founded
As a house upon the sand;
For the rough, discolored jewel
Had forever left his hand.

Seems a voice to chant and whisper
From the ancient land of Khem:
"Say ye to that higher seeker
For his Master's diadem—
'Look ye well as he who, seeing,
Deeply reads and understands;
Show not at thy Master's bidding
The reproach of empty hands.' "

THE ANGEL'S COMING.

To Dr. and Mrs. W. H. Zieber.

In Memory of their Darling who has passed from Earth to Heaven.

Fair was the world with morning
And sweet with the breath of Spring;
The groves rang loud with the thrushes' pipe
And May-bird's caroling;
When over the crystal river
And down from the pearl-gate clear,
An angel came to whisper
A word in an infant's ear.—
The child-brow shadowed a holy rest
As it lay so still on its mother's breast.

Bright was the world with noon-tide;
Ahum with the toil of men,
Thrilling with hope and promise
When the angel came again;
And his calm, sweet eyes were tearful
At a sad heart's bitter cry,
Who saw but the present parting
And knew not the by and bye—
But the still cold brow and the sleeping eye
Responded not to her agony.

Chill was the world with evening;
Gray with a winter's rain,
When the Angel with eyes of pity
Descended to Earth again;
For a woman worn and feeble,
Burdened and sore distressed,
Was to hear from his lips the welcome
"Enter thou into rest."—
Her face so wan shone strangely fair
As long-missed voices thrilled the air.

Come when the morn is waking,
Or come at the evetide drear,
Never we fear thy footsteps,
Ever a Friend is near;
High over dirge and death-wail
Hear we His words today:
"Whoso believeth and trusteth in me
Abideth in life alway."
Rent is the tomb while immortal light
Dawns in the valley of earthly night.

MOTHER.

Comes memory on airy wing
O'er misty spaces vast,
And brings the golden pictures
From the pages of the past.
Faint, far-off voices, calling me,
Awaken old desire;
Sweet faces look upon me,
Lit with love's undying fire.

Among them one loved face I see,
Dearer than all the rest;
Of childhood's friends the truest,
Of boyhood's guides the best.
I seem to hear her tireless feet
Pass swiftly to and fro,
While softly float upon the air
The songs of long ago.

Mother! The murmur of thy name
Bids tender memories start
And love's own dew lies trembling
On the petals of the heart.
My soul is anchored by this thought
In spite of storm and stress:
The heart that loved me first and best
Will never love me less.

Again I kneel before thee,
As the daylight westward slips,
And childhood's fond petition comes
To manhood's bearded lips;
Thy hands are still upon my head,
Thy voice my spirit charms,
Nor time nor change can keep me
From the refuge of thy arms.

Mother, this fitting monument
To thee we dedicate:
A noble aim, a purpose true,
A manhood strong and great.
We offer these, love's token
To the one who gave us birth;
While fondly loyal lips repeat
The dearest name on earth.

FATHER.

Well have we sung with lips of love
Of childhood's earliest friend and guide,
But Justice bids us ne'er forget
The sterner figure by her side.

No idler looked from his true eyes;
No trifler framed his gentle speech;
But faithfulness and sacrifice
By him a daily sermon preach.

A playmate kind in hours of mirth;
A teacher wise in Nature's school;
His strong hands' tasks, his warm heart's love
Exemplified life's Golden Rule.

Like some great oak whose leafy arms
Protect the tender plants below,
He bent above our early lives
And helped each latent virtue grow.

Across the years I see him yet—
His toil-worn hands, his kindly face,
His winsome smile—O, Memory,
Keep, for my sire, an honored place.

HISTORY AND ORIGIN OF THE BAPTIST CHURCH.

This poem is used by special permission of its author and owner, Rev. A. R. Fetterhoff.

How strange so many people will ask and ask again,
From whence has come the Baptist Church, their searching seems in vain.
To tell them that from Jesus the Baptist Church has come;
To tell them thus He teaches; it seems a foreign tongue.

Why don't you search the Scriptures, from Matthew on through John,
And learn it was a Baptist that did baptize the Son?
Down in the rolling Jordan he found a liquid grave;
And rising from the water the spirit witness gave.

It was a Baptist preacher that preached the gospel first;
And he baptized the people to constitute the Church.
Why don't you read the Bible? For Jesus says as much;
He took the Baptist people and made a Baptist Church.

And there the Baptists started, when John baptized the Lamb,
Endorsing John's commission and all that he had done.
Then taking John's disciples, believers and baptized,
And made a Baptist church and so they were organized.

Why do you search the pages of history, there to find
The beginning of the Baptist Church? although within her lines.
But go to Matthew's gospel, to Mark and Luke and John,
And there is the beginning, from Jesus Christ the Son.

Don't contradict the Bible and contradict God's word;
For the first Baptist preacher was commissioned by the Lord,
To teach them faith in Jesus and to baptize the same,
And thus we have the Baptist Church; 'tis here in Jesus' name.

If all of men's traditions were laid upon the shelf;
And each and every Christian examine for himself,
And take the words of Jesus, and love them then as such;
There would be no division; just a Bible Baptist church.

ANOTHER WORD ABOUT CHURCH HISTORY.

I've searched the Holy Scriptures through from Matthew
on to John,
And then through Acts and Romans I've studied gladly on;
I've searched Paul's wondrous letters and The Revelator's
mind,
But "Baptists" or the "Baptist Church" I truly fail to find.

I found a Jewish Nazarite* of Aaron's priestly line
Who preached a stern repentance and prepared a "Way"
divine,
Who witness bore of truest "Light" to which we all may
look,
But that he formed the Baptist Church is not within the
Book.

I saw the Christ, our Great High Priest, by love divine ap-
pointed,
Approach the age when ancient priests were by the law an-
ointed:
With pure water John thus fulfilled the Law's initiation,
But that He was a "Baptist Christ" is pure imagination.

I found no word of "liquid grave," the Baptists' fond desire,
But much of "Life" and promised gift of Holy Ghost and
Fire.
I heard good Stephen witnessing when under false arrest,
That far back in old Moses' day the world a Church pos-
sessed.

Heard John, a Hebrew Prophet, warn a church of life bereft—
To which his fathers all belonged and which he never left!—
When viewed by Church-blind eyes which still pretend the task of teacher,
They're quoted "Baptist people" quick and he a "Baptist Preacher"!

I found "The Church," "The Flock," "The Bride," "The House," "The Congregation,"
But "Baptists" or "The Baptist Church" are "human revelation."
"The Church of God," "The Church of Christ," His "Body," "The Lamb's Wife";
No single name The Church has borne. Away with foolish strife!

If history's page we closely scan with mind serene and clear,
In less than three long centuries past the Baptists first appear;
To Menno Simon, pious soul, they owe their sudden rise,
And quickly spread o'er Europe, wide, with godly enterprise.

'Twas Roger Williams fathered first your Church this side, my brother.
He and a neighbor—do not laugh—made Baptists of each other!
'Tis thus they've come from John on down without a rip or wrinkle,
And some of their own writers say they really used to sprinkle!

Come, brother, get THE BOOK again; take off your Baptist glasses.
How fair the RIVER of GOD'S GRACE before our vision passes!

That GRACE to all the world is free—let's not unchurch
each other;
Each is His child, if Christ be ours; your hand in mine, my
brother!

*Compare Num. 6:1-5 with Matt. 11:18.

†See Newman's History of the Baptist Church, introductory chapters.

MY LASSIE.

O, my lassie's eyes are bonnie blue,
Her curling tresses gold;
In every sweet and winsome way
Is love's dear story told.
Yet these are not her greatest charm,
For that you cannot see—
'Tis written in my lassie's heart
She ever loveth me.

Her touch is like the snowflake,
Her voice is low and clear
And in my soul's deep casket
I keep her face so dear.
When tired of the tossing
On life's uneven sea
I whisper low, with tender glow,
"My lassie loveth me."

O were I in a palace
'Twere naught without my dear;
A cottage were a mansion
If she were always near;
O, snowy-fingered angels,
Her watchers ever be
And keep from every sorrow
The heart that loveth me.

THE GRANGER Y'S.

Here's to the Y.'s, they take the prize;
Smiling faces and sparkling eyes,
Sweet, good-nature and wholesome cheer—
None but the true are welcome here!
They're out to help the cause of right
And swell the temperance band,
And each good work in the whole wide world.
Finds here a helping hand.

Cheer for the Y.'s; no one denies
The foe they fight is strong—
King Alcohol will surely fall
Though his sway has lasted long;
For our youth shall know
How his power lays low,
All our hopes for the future fair
And we'll turn away in youth's glad day
From the blight of the wine-cup's snare.

God bless the Y,'s!
Every true heart cries;
May their host each day increase,
Till none be left of their power bereft
And the work of the spoiler cease!
May a new day come
When in every home
Cold water the drink shall be—
So here's to the Y.'s,
May the future's skies
Show their glorious destiny.

This little sketch was written as a test in original composition at a social given by the Y. W. C. T. U.

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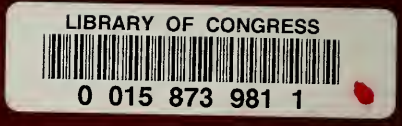
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